



March 22, 2019

The Honorable Dennis Bonnen
Speaker of the House
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin TX, 78768-2910

RE: CSHB3: the Texas Plan

Dear Speaker Bonnen,

The Texas business community has worked with the Legislature for years to enact pro-growth policies that ensure the state's reputation as a great place to build a business. Our continued economic success, however, depends on our state's ability to build a skilled workforce. Access to a quality workforce starts with how our state funds public education.

As members of the Texas business community, we write to express our continued support of the Legislature's efforts to meaningfully reform the school finance system this legislative session. The Metro 8 Chambers represent the business sectors of Texas' eight largest metropolitan areas: Arlington, Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston and San Antonio. Collectively, the Metro 8 chamber regions comprise more than 20 million residents and \$1.3 trillion in GDP. We support increasing funding that is student-focused and results-driven.

The Metro 8 commends you, House Public Education Committee Chairman Dan Huberty, Vice Chairman Diego Bernal, and the members of the public education committee for your work on House Bill 3. We appreciate the efforts of the House to include in the developing bill \$9 billion in new funding directed toward equitably increasing the state's share of funding public education and reducing the local burden of recapture. This is a prudent investment by the state to alleviate the financial strain on local school districts and property taxpayers. Additionally, we are pleased with the focus on high-need student populations and the prioritization of funding for early childhood education.

We are supportive of the committee substitute for House Bill 3 and its new provisions providing incentive pay for teachers who work at our high-need campuses. Providing school districts with the flexibility and resources to develop local educator evaluation systems and reward those same teachers who excel is an important step towards improving all student success. As business leaders, we support strategies that help support and retain effective educators in Texas classrooms and encourage the House to include these provisions in the final package.

We want to thank you and your colleagues in the House for your leadership on this important issue. Updating Texas' school funding system is our top priority this legislative session as it is critical to ensure the continued prosperity of the state. Texas businesses continue to stand ready to work with you and members of the legislature on passing meaningful reform this legislative session.

Sincerely,

Dale Petroskey, President and CEO, Dallas Regional Chamber, 2018 Metro 8 Chair

Mike Rollins, President and CEO, Austin Chamber of Commerce

Michael Jacobson, President and CEO, Greater Arlington Chamber of Commerce

Cleo Rodriguez Jr., President and CEO, United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce

David Michael Jerome, President and CEO, El Paso Chamber of Commerce

Bill Thornton, President and CEO, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce

Bob Harvey, President and CEO, Greater Houston Partnership

Richard Perez, President and CEO, San Antonio Chamber of Commerce

cc: House Public Education Committee Members
Senate Committee on Education Members